



With the second half of the grazing season underway attention should be starting to turn towards lambing percentage for 2020 while also considering fattening and store lambs.



Breeding ewe lambs (and shearlings)

This can bring higher profits but also requires more labour input therefore needs careful consideration. Ewe lambs have lower fertility than mature ewes, but higher lifetime production if managed well.

If you plan to breed ewe lambs and/or shearlings this year make sure they have reached target weights prior to tupping. This is to make sure they are mature enough to be fertile and able to continue growing while in lamb/rearing a lamb. To know what you should be targeting, weigh a group of your correct conditioned adult ewes (3 years +). Shearlings should be at least 80% of adult body weight and ewe lambs 60% at tupping time.

Use your own records or EBVs to determine the best ram for low birth weights to avoid lambing difficulties and lower litter size as ewe lambs will naturally produce less milk and should still be growing while rearing their lamb.

Select ewe lambs to tup from well grown twins if home bred or if buying in try to source from one place with a known disease status.

Scan to identify non pregnant animals that can be sold or fattened.

As ewe lambs are still growing they need 20% more feed than mature ewes during early and mid pregnancy. 6 weeks pre lambing feed only maintenance rations as this is when the foetus does most of the growing to keep birth weights lower. Once lambbed they again need 20% more feed than the adults and their lambs should be creep fed. Aim to wean at 8-9 weeks old to avoid dragging the mothers down.



Ewe lambs are generally more prone to udder damage and mastitis so monitor closely.

Black scour worm - *Trichostrongylus* sp.

Worms are not just a summer problem; the type of infections can change with the season. In spring we focus on *Nematodirus*, as we move towards autumn the black scour worm is the most common one in sheep. This is important as it will have significant impacts on growth and some long acting wormers do not actually have a persistent affect for this type of worm. See table below:

Treatment should be given based upon:

- Faecal Egg Counts
- Reduction in daily live weight gains (less than 150g/day if on grass alone).

Product	Brown Stomach Worm (Teladorsagia sp.) Summer/Autumn Persistence	Black Scour Worm (Trichostrongylus sp.) Autumn/Winter Persistence	Meat Withdrawal
Moxidectin 0.1% Drench	5 weeks	0	14 days
Moxidectin 1% Injection	5 weeks	2 weeks	70 days
Moxidectin 2% LA 20mg/kg	14 weeks	6 weeks	104 days

Correct as of 29/8/19 – check product information before use

Fluke

Currently forecast as low risk but with the warm wet weather continuing this could easily change heading in to autumn, leading to a much higher risk than autumn 2018 which followed a warm, dry grazing season. Therefore it is important to be vigilant looking for any clinical signs especially if you have had a history of fluke in the past or have animals grazing risky pasture.

Fluke control – points to consider:

- Fully vaccinate ALL sheep with either Ovivac P or Heptavac P – FLUKE infection predisposes the sheep to clostridial disease ‘BLACK’s disease’
- AVOID grazing poorly drained pasture
- If you are unsure if your farm has fluke infection present – then we can blood test 12 ewes as a representative group to look for exposure to fluke

Haemonchus



Haemonchus contortis or the ‘Barber’s pole worm’ is a stomach worm that attaches to the stomach lining (abomasum) and feeds off blood. It is also able to survive on pasture well despite any hot weather in comparison to normal round worms.

It can affect lambs as well as ewes as animals produce **NO** lasting immunity to the worm. Large numbers of worms can have a devastating effect in a very short time span causing severe anaemia and lots of “sudden” deaths, particularly in lambs. Importantly, presenting signs can be very similar to acute fluke.

Key Clinical signs:

- Sudden death in ewes or lambs
- **ANAEMIA** pale mucous membranes
- **NO scour**
- Lethargic and weak animals
- Bottle jaw
- Thin ewes – from chronic infections



If you have any concerns about Haemonchus, please speak to us about your farm risks. Faecal samples and drench checks can be useful starting points for diagnosis